لا إله إلا الله محمد رسول الله

إن الدين عند الله الإسلام

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THE REVIEW OF RELIGIONS

November 1966

EDITORS

S. D. AHMAD M. G. AHMAD

THE AHMADIYYA MOVEMENT IN ISLAM

The Promised Messiah, Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad was born in 1835 in Qadian, a village in India. In the eighties of the 19th century, he was called to the office of world Reformer to combat the current of anti-religious philosophies and to explode the Christian theory of redemption based on the fiction of Christ's death on the Cross and to tell the Christians and Muslims to call off their hope for a second visit from Christ as he had been gathered to his forefathers and barred like all mortals from coming back to the world; and that he, the Promised Messiah, had come instead.

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The Promised Messiah initiated the Ahmadiyya Movement (1) to revive Faith in God, challenging rival churches to a spiritual contest to seek Divine sanction for the religion He favoured, through prayer and appeal to Him for guidance and arbitration in the matter, by means of His signs (2) to re-establish the glory of the Holy Prophet Muhammad and to expound and disseminate spiritual beauties and moral excellencies of the teachings of the Holy Quran (3) to wean men from war-like tendencies and to educate world opinion in favour of renunciation of war as a means of settling disputes (4) to infuse hope, faith and courage in the drooping hearts of Muslims and all the depressed races and nations of the world (5) to warn the exploiters, slave-drivers, and pedlars in sin against the evil consequences of their evil ways (6) to collect under one banner all the true followers of Islam and lovers of peace and (7) to inculcate among them the spirit of tolerance, goodwill and self-less fellow-service and a feeling of true brotherhood.

The Promised Messiah passed away in 1908 and was succeeded by his foremost votary and closest companion Hazrat Haji Hakim Maulvi Nooruddin as Khalifatul Masih I. After his death in 1914, the Promised Son of the Promised Messiah, Hazrat Haji Mirza Bashiruddin Mahmud Ahmad was chosen as the Khalifatul Masih II. During his 52 years of Imamat the Khalifatul Masih II organized a world-girdling chain of mosques and missions. On his death on November 8, 1965, the electoral college named with one accord Hafiz Mirza Nasir Ahmad, the late Khalifatul Masih's son and the Promised Messiah's grandson, the Khalifatul Masih III.

For further information about the Movement, its activities and aims and objectives or literature, enquiries may be addressed to the nearest Ahmadiyya Mission or direct to

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It is open to all for discussing problems connected with the religious and spiritual growth of man, but it does not give any assurance to publish all articles, nor does it accept any responsibility for views expressed by contributors.

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CONTENTS

		Pages
1.	A Great Leader ! A Promised Khalifa *Malik Saifur Rahman* ...	363
2.	Some Distinctive Features of Islam *Prof. Habibullah Khan* ...	380

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The Review of Religions

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A Great Leader : A Promised Khalifa

Malik Saifur Rahman

For leadership, in the field of religion, Islam envisages two positions, of basic and fundamental importance—the first, of foremost importance, is the position of an Apostle from God ; the main and the real thing, bestowed as a pure gift from the Lord. The second is the position of a Khalifa, the Successor, of an Apostle, of which the merit and authority reflects the merit and authority of an Apostle ; it descends to him through a mechanism of election. As the basis of an entirely new structure, whether with respect to the completion of a religious teaching, or its propagation, Apostleship is conferred, as needed, for a particular period. The second is intended to strengthen the foundation, and the structure raised on it ; to accomplish the mission entrusted to the Apostle, for whom the Khalifa stands as a successor. It comes to one of the followers of the Apostle, through a spontaneous and free election, on the basis of a free

vote, cast in sheer honesty of mind and purpose, without canvassing in any shape or form. This institution of Khilafat, thus brought into existence, is expected to last for a long time—in fact, as long as the body politic of the followers of the Prophet retains its original purity of purpose, and devotion to the mission. The first position represents a direct manifestation of the power and might of the Lord God, in the first instance : the second comprises a second manifestation of His will and purpose—a manifestation of the Lord's help and succour as extended to the stalwart emerging from an election, to fulfil the purpose and the plan of the mission. Thus we find that the Promised Messiah, the Apostle and Prophet for this era, was an embodyment, so to say, of the power and might of the Lord ; and his Khulafa, his successors, represent the second point—that of the second manifestation of the power of Allah, operating through the endeavour of the Khalifa, to accomplish the mission entrusted to him, on the basis of his sense of an overriding devotion to the aims and purposes of the teaching of that Apostle. The duty of perfecting the endeavour to propagate the faith, laid on the shoulders of the Promised Messiah, comprises such a vast responsibility, such a hard and difficult task, with its inherent call to carry the message of the movement all over the world, that at the commencement of the mission the Promised Messiah, most naturally in the circumstances, was weighed down by a gnawing anxiety as to how would he be able to accomplish the task since the means placed at his disposal, for winning this purpose, in the unhindered discretion of the Lord, were only of the kind we call spiritual, in a direct contrast with the power and force we call material—means only spiritual, moral and intellectual Political power and material dominance was not included. Evidently, now, the task of propagating the true religion by means of spiritual, moral and intellectual argument, and to invest the followers of the true faith with an unmistakable moral ascendance, demands a constant struggle, a sustained endeavour, for a long period of time without developing a weakness at any point, forging ahead from day to day. There is no doubt that after the first manifestation, the second manifestation shoulders all the

heavy responsibilities of the mission, or the dispensation, and the work of the mission continues under the Khilafat. But, as hinted above, since the institution of the Khilafat is based on a vote, and an election by frail human beings, liable to be influenced and swayed by a multiplicity of factors and impulses, the danger of weakness of some sort creeping into the body politic is always there, this was the point on which the Promised Messiah, during the early period of his ministry, remained anxious and deeply disturbed in his mind. This was one of the main reasons why, under a hint from his Master, the Lord God, he undertook a visit to Hoshiarpur. Here, for a period of full forty days, he practically isolated himself from the world of man, and its affairs — to devote his mind fully to an intense worship of the Lord, deep contemplation over the Divine Attributes, and to abandon himself into the hands of God, by supplication and prayer, that the attendant difficulties and obstacles be cleared out of his path, and he be given a body of followers who should unflaggingly serve the aim and purpose of the mission entrusted to him, as had been the case in the time of the Holy Prophet, and his devoted Companions. Thus he prayed most fervently for a Sign in the form of a second manifestation, which should serve, on the one hand, to silence his thoughtless critics, on the other, prove to be a source of great and continuing blessings for those who had responded to the call, so that the fulfillment of the aim of his ministry be set on a firm foundation and it should come to be attained without fail, in its own proper course of time. Allah was pleased to grant this supplication, and spoke to him to the following effect :

"I confer on you a Sign of grace and mercy, even as you had asked of Me. I have heard the supplications you have addressed, in a heavy grief and suffering of the mind. I have accepted your prayers ; and I have turned your visit to Hoshiarpur and Ludhiana into a great source of blessings for you. So a Sign of strength and power, of grace and nearness, is being extended to you ; a Sign of

bounty and grace, a Sign of munificence is granted to you. The key of conquest and glory is being put into your hands. O ye, the conqueror, peace be on you. Even the Almighty God had said this, that those who seek life, should obtain release from the claws of death ; that those who lie buried in their graves, should be quickened and sally forth ; that the merit and honour which belongs to the Holy Quran, and the virtue of Islam, should be made manifest ; that the Truth should come, with all the attendant blessings and Falsehood, with all its disabilities and curses, should be made to flee ; that people should see, should come to realise, that I am indeed Almighty, and I can compass whatsoever I will and choose ; that the people should come to perceive I am with you ; that those who deny God, and look upon the question of the Existence of Allah, and His Scripture, and His Apostle with the eyes of denial and rejection—that all these should get a clear, unquestionable Sign ; and the way of the transgressors should be made manifest."

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As stated above, in his supplications, to which reference has been made by Allah in the Revelation set down in this quotation, the Promised Messiah very humbly requested two things : (1) that he be given a body of disciples and helpers, in point of firmness of faith and calibre, like the Companions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad ; (2) a great and clear Sign, of which a glorious fulfillment should lead to a signal victory of the truth, and a staggering discomfiture of the enemies and opponents. In the passage quoted above Allah has communicated to him the glad tidings that these supplications had been granted. In regard to a body of devoted and firm followers, the Lord said he would increase the number and strength of his disciples who would be deeply devoted to him and his mission ; that He would make

them prevail against the rest of the Muslims of the various sects, till the Day of Reckoning. With regard to those hostile to him and his mission, from jealousy, and from the evil inclinations of their mind, Allah would deal with them according to their intent and endeavour.

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In regard to the decisive argument in the form of a Sign, Allah was pleased to convey to him :

"So a glad tiding is conveyed to you that an impressive, dignified, righteous and pure boy would be given to you, a boy with an intelligent and high sensitivity of mind He would be of your own seed, one among your own descendants. Fazal is with him : shall come with him, at the time of his own coming. He shall be gifted with splendour, greatness and wealth. He will come into this world ; and with his messianic breath, and the soul of truth, he shall cure many of disease. He is Kalimatullah (Word of Allah), for the mercy and compassion, the extremely jealous sense of honour of the Lord God, has sent him with the Word of Elevation (with *Kalima-i-Tamjid*). He shall be extremely intelligent, very quick of grasp ; kind at heart. He shall be made full of outward and inner knowledge. He shall raise three to a count of four (of this the meaning is not clear to me). Tuesday, the blessed Tuesday. A son, full of attraction ; inspiring reverance, full of the rarest qualities. Manifester of the First and the last ; manifester of the truth and dominance. As if Allah Himself had come down from the heavens. The one whose appearance, advent, shall be full of blessings—an occasion for a manifestation of the majesty and splendour of the Lord. Light is coming—the Light, annointed by God, with the fragrance of His approval and pleasure. Our breath We shall infuse

into him, and the shielding shadow of the Lord shall be on his head. He will grow up very rapidly, and lead to the release of many trapped into slavery. His reputation and fame shall spread even to the outermost fringes of the earth, and nations shall seek blessings from him. Thereafter he shall be lifted up to his *nafsi nuqta*, (point which forms the centre of his personality) in the heavens."

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How. grand, indeed ! how satisfying, is this glad tiding, How completely satisfactory is this answer to his anxious prayers and supplications ! So satisfactory, that from that moment all his apprehensions, all his fears, were thorughly eliminated ! This was in February 1886. And then it so came to pass that the Lord God, from Whom no promise is left unfulfilled, granted to him both rewards in the fullest measure. He was given a body of followers which amply set forth, before the world, an undeniable instance to which the Quranic description was fully applicable, namely, description given in these words :

> "And those of them, of the later times, who have not yet joined them".

In sincerity and devotion, they presented a model picture, reproducing the example set by worthy Companions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad. This body of the followers of the Promised Messiah was outstanding in character and conduct, remarkably distinguished in point of the sacrifices they made for the great Cause ; unique in aim and aspirations. For propagation of the Islamic values, they gathered themselves together on a blessed hand ; they showed to the world a singular example of virtue and devotion—so singular, so unique the angles in heaven hailed them with ringing and echoing shouts of satisfaction and joy ; and Lord God, Himself, conveyed to them His approval and commendation, in Revelations bearing on these events. Besides, it is a remarkable coincidence that this devoted band came formally into existence during the very days when the second Sign in this connection was destined to be fulfilled. The first

Revelation in which the Promised Messiah was called to his mission, was received by him in 1882. Anxiety over the proper achievement of this mission took the Promised Messiah to Hoshiarpur, under a heavenly hint, in retirement and vigil, to concentrate on prayer and worship, in the utmost sense of humility, in the deepest anxieties of mind over the extraordinary obstacles in the path of a proper discharge of the duty placed on his shoulders, that he should ask for a capable son, a competent deputy, in beauty and magnanimity of mind, quite like his own self—and for a devoted band of followers to help him in the fulfillment of the mission, with the leadership of the Movement descending to a distinguished son of his own, through whose endeavour the Movement should come to be placed on a firm footing, with a perpetuation of the manifestation of the *Qudrat-i-Thania* (the second manifestation of the power and glory of Lord). These prayers and supplications, in His great mercy and grace, were accepted by Allah, whereof he conveyed the news to the whole world, by means of a leaflet published on February 20, 1886, that those who longed for life, should obtain release from the clutches of death, and gain eternal life ; that those who do not yield faith in the existence of God ; those who deny the Holy Quran, and the Apostle of Allah, they should witness an open Sign, and the path of the transgressors should be seen by all, as such. Then it came to pass that the Promised Son was born in January, 1889 ; and only a couple of months later, in clear fulfillment of the prophecy made by the Holy Prophet Muhammad, formal announcement was made, in Ludhiana, of the Ahmadiyya Movement having been brought into existence, when the first *bai'at* was taken. In other words, both Signs of the grace and mercy of the Lord God came to be witnessed at one and the same time, the implication being that the two incidents were closely related, relationship since confirmed by subsequent events. The promised son grew with a remarkable speed, in great strides. In a series of unfavourable circumstances, in spite of powerful opposition, on the part of a number of people, in key positions, in the set up of the Movement, he was elected by the membership of the Movement to the holy office of

Khilafat, on March 14, 1914. In relation to this event, the First Successor of the Promised Messiah, Hazrat Maulvi Nur-ud-Din, referred to the position of the coming Khalifa, in one of his *khutbas*, to the following effeet :

> "Here let me make one point, which you should remember very clearly. I am saying this in response to some inner urge and sense of duty, since the words have risen to my lips in spite of my desire and endeavour that I should remain silent on the point. In a vision I have seen Khawaja Sulaiman, may Allah rest his soul ; he had a great love for the Holy Quran. In my heart I have a very great deal of respect and love for this eminent saint. He remained on the seat of the Khilafat for a full 78 years. He was only 22 when he was raised to this office. Remember I have said this in view of a specific purpose, and solely for the welfare and the good of all." (July 27, 1910).

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So this Leader, this Imam, came, as foretold in the glad tidings conveyed to the Promised Messiah by the Lord God; in grandeur, at his proper time, he came to be elected to the seat of the khalifa, to bear the crown of a successful leadership. Then, in time, after he had completed the task assigned to him, at 2. 20 a.m. on the night of November 8, 1965, at the age of 78, in terms of the Lunar year, as foretold, he was lifted to his *nafsi nukta* in the heavens. Members of the Movement were so utterly attachad to him, so devoted, that mentally they were absolutely not prepared to hear the news of his demise. The very idea of having to part from him set their hearts sinking with grief. In this loyalty and love, the heart of the Movement had prayed to Allah, with a flood of tears, in 1955, to the following effect:

> "O Lord, he had brought us so close to you, that we felt as though you Yourself, had come down among us, out of the heavens. He used to recite the Holy Quran to us, from such depths in the

heart of his being, that we used to feel the *wahy* which had come to the Holy Prophet, was today descending right in front of our eyes. He related to us things and events connected with the Promised Messiah, when it appeared to us as if the Promised Messiah, himself, were talking to us. Neverthless, O Lord, our contact with you is not yet as deep as it should have been; our relationship with You is not firm enough. If now he passes away, we shall be left entirely helpless. The need of the time is that he be left among us in this world for still a long time. Be pleased to let him stay to teach us, in a manner should make it feel You yourself were relating those things to us."

(Friday Sermon, November 1955)

We should also remember that this relationship of love and loyalty was two sided: he also loved his followers with such depth of the soul, as against which all other kinds of love turned pale and weak. On one occasion, he prayed to the Lord God, the Source of all blessings, the Lord God, Creator and Master, the absolute Master, in terms of the most sublime import a prayer, again, he has repeated innumerable times, in the course of his life, in substance and spirit, the same, though in varying words and phrases:

"My Lord God, my real Father, my Father in heaven, I am not in any anxiety in regard to my children, that they would be left orphans. My anxiety is that the body of sincere followers Thy Apostle had prepared, after centuries of a barren period in Muslim history, that precious band would be left an orphan. If You gave me this one and simple assurance that this body will not be left friendless, that You would make some satisfactory and sure arragnement to watch over their welfare and welbeing, my mind would

be set at rest during the moments even of the utmost pain and suffering. Lord God, how can You expect these milions of spiritual children You have been pleased to give me—these children whom all the great forces of evil operating in the affairs of man are striving hard every moment to destroy, when I am no longer among them, to take all the blows of the enemy on myself, and shield them from harm, tell me, what will become of them. How can I contemplate such a future for them, and yet remain undisturbed in mind? I am not afraid of death. What I am afraid of is this that these sincere people, who have made such signal sacrifices, they will be left abandoned at a time when, as yet, they are not strong enough to fend for themselves, these poor and simple people who have made such heavy sacrifices over a long period which extends over a full fifty years? They were virtually penniless; they had nothing of the kind of goods people call wealth; they had no material advantage over even the weakest among the weak. But whenever I called them to put their best foot forward, that Thy Light should spread all over the world they never failed me. They never let me down. Now, my Lord God, I appeal to You in the name of Thine Own sense of loyalty, they were weak, but in Thy paths they have always remained true and steadfast. How can You let them down when you have all the strength to befriend them, howsoever strong the opponent? If You, in Your place with all Your might, fail to come to their help, that would not be in keeping with Your position of the utmost powor and dignity, Your attributes of the utmost exellence, Your qualities of power and purity, without the very least touch of fault or weakness, anywhere."

When he took up the reins as the Second Successor of the Promised Messiah, there was nothing in the treasury of the Movement, except a few annas. A major portion of the prominent and leading people in the set up of the Movement, took up a position of uncompromising hostility, in fact a totally fanatic and blind hostility. Goaded by this personal factor in the situation, they were bent upon torpedoing the very institution of Khilafat, an honour to which the major portion of the membership of the Movement had raised him, had declined to raise any one of their personal inner group. But he gave no importance to any obstacle placed in his path. In a spirit of the utmost reliance on the grace and mercy of the Lord God, he took charge at a time when he utterly lacked the material means, of which at least a modicum of some sort is indispensible for implementing stupendous policies and programmes. Then, very soon, however, there came the time when the Movement was the owner of property worth millions. In the treasury of the Movement money came flowing in, ample enough for him to lay the foundation of a structure which can safely be expected to endure. Within the country, across its entire length and breadth, he sent deputations to carry the message of the Movement to every town, every city, every village, every hamlet, in fact almost to every home, so that now we find the purport and the purpose of the Movement hovering right over the head of every sensible person in the country, calling upon them all to come forward and join hands in implementing the great plans and programmes in the service of Islam, at a time of dire need. He has done all this, when the group that had drifted away from the Centre, rather than submit to his leadership, was constantly plunging the knife into his back, in various ways to break up the Movement itself, because it had dared to place itself in his hands, not theirs. What he had said to the authors of this split, at the very start, was indeed very true that Allah would break them all to pieces ; that He would not allow them to break up and disperse the Movement.

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Internally, there come, first, the mischief of the Mistree's, as

it came to be generally called, since the main tools in the hands of the opponents were a family of mechanics, by profession. In course of time, then, came the plan and the plot of a man who was known in the Movement by the name of Misri, since for some time he had lived in Misr (Egypt) as a missionary of the Movement. He considered that he was a very learned man, with influence among the Ahmadies. He thought they would follow him, wheresoever he might care to lead them. But all his plans, all his conspiracies to injure his good name, dissolved just into smoke, and melted into the air.

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The hostile endeavour of enemies of the Movement, in the wider world were in addition to the internal bother. The Hindus, the Aryasamajists, authors and leaders of what came to be called the Shuddhi Movement, designed to mislead backward people, in a large area of the United Provinces of Agra and Oudh, as it was called in the British period of those days. The activities of the Christian missionaries; attacks from the Ahrar camp; violent, anti Admadiyya disturbance in 1953, which placed the country under Marshall Law, to be brought under control. But this stalwart never lost heart; he never wavered in the very least; he pressed on and on, with the Movement leaping forward at every step under his able and determined leadership, so that even those who were not favourably disposed towards him, personally, or towards the Movement, found themselves forced to concede that here was a determination and a brain that could shake empires, and deep seated social structures which have to be demolished, and the debris removed, before a structure could be built afresh. In addition to the consolidation of the Movement, in the country itself, he brought into being an efficient network of Islamic missions, in far off climes and foreign lands, in Europe, Africa, USA, and many other countries of the old and New worlds, among the whites, the blacks, the Chinese, and the Japanese peoples. As foretold in regard to him, he has come to be known to the remotest corners and fringes of the human universe spread all over the globe.

Coming to the intellectual and the academic sphere, a constant

river in flood, has flowed from his lips, and his pen, to enlighten the world in the terms of Islam; he has smashed every attack the enemy has mounted against the ramparts of Islam. He has written books; he has spoken from the stage, staedily over the years, so that his lectures, delivered among the Ahmadies, and those outside the fold of the Movement, reduced to writing and printed, which would run into scores of heavy volumes. He has to his credit a commentry on the Holy Book which is a standing marvel, in its length, and breadth, and an uncommon depth. He has had a copious literature translated into English, and some other European, African, and Asiatic languages. His speeches delivered on the Annual Gatherings of the Movement, first in Qadian, then in Rabwah, after the birth of Pakistan, form a remarkably learned series, in exposition of aspects of Islam, on points under attack from any quarters, and points wherein lies the unique strength and potential of Islam for solving the great problems of civilization which continue to plague human society everywhere, even though man has lived and learnt to fly in the air, remain submerged under the shoreless seas and oceans, for months on end. A unique and most interesting characteristic of these scholarly addresses is that even in discussion of the most subtle and diffcult philosophic problems, he carried his audiences with him even where the people were mostly illiterate. This is a very difficult part in public speaking, and his share in this field will always remain a marvel in the eyes of those educated well enough to appreciate its value.

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His endeavour and solicitude to educate the membership of the Movement is a marvel of achievment in its own place. He brought into being efficient circles of deep study over the Islamic teaching and practice, in the context of modern conditions ; regular classes in the field of a comparative study of Religion. He designed and put into practice, a system of education which produces missionaries, learned and wide awake enough to work in foreign lands, carrying there an understanding, an interpretation of Islam, which places it in a winning position, wheresoever it comes to a direct confrontation with other religions and systems of thought

and practical living, on an individual, national, and international plane—an understanding, an interpretation which brings Islam immediately to the forefront in the eyes of discerning and enlightened people. The supervision and guidance given to the foreign missions working under his control is another important aspect of his life; his watchful eye over the central administrative set up covering the various departments; directions given to the staff that mans the various offices—in fact there is no end of the work he presses out of the fleeting moments. His solicitude for providing due protection for the rights of all, and everyone — this is another story of absorbing interest.

On the point of justice for all, he never made any distinction between his own followers and those outside the fold of the Movement; he always aimed at the due discharge of duties one owes to one's own self, and the duties one owes to other people: he won the confidence of all. He won their hearts——the hearts of people who came into contact with him, at home, and abroad. For the membership of the Movement he created and guided a Department of Justice, where disputes between two members of the Movement are adjudicated upon, without the botheration, and expenses, of litigation in the law courts of the country, which entail a long and troublesome course of action. But it has to be remembered that the Department of Justice does not in any manner impose its adjudication upon members. In case of unwillingness of either party to the dispute, the parties remain absolutely free to go to the law courts of the country, without any kind of stigma upon them.

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A glance at the internal organisation brought into being by Hazrat Khalifatul Massih II is very interesting. *Majlis-i-Moshawarat*, the House of Consultation, is an organ of the utmost importance. Its function is to profer an opinion to the Khalifa, on questions he might like to have the advantage of a discussion and consultation from his friends and followers, which amply fulfills the best democratic needs taken to be so important these days of Western influence. But in creating this institution, Hazrat Khalifatul Masih II was not actuated by any desire to copy the West. It

was in fulfillment of the Quranic requirement that the Head of the body politic, under the Apostle and his successors, called Khalifas, should consult his followers over matters of importance, as they should spring up in the path of the Movement, from one cause or another. Apart from this, the organisation created to supervise and conduct the affairs of the Movement, under the Khalifa, is called the *Sadr Anjuman-i-Ahmadiyya*. The offices at the centre are divided into a number of *Nazarats*, the head of each being a *Nzair*, the equivalent of a minister, so to speak. Offices of importance in the local memberships of a town or village, or locality, are those of the local *Amir*, or president, and various secretaries, answerable to the Sadar Anjuman at the centre. Then there is the *Majlis* of the *Waqf-i-Jadeed*, an institution which combines the vast aims of propagation of the Movement in country districts, and work on lines of village aid, to raise the mental and social level of the village populations, and to improve their economic condition, as far as it may fall within the compass of devoted missionaries of the Movement, working in various places, chosen after a good deal of study of the obtaining conditions. The *Majlis-i-Tehrik-i-Jadid* controls the missions working in foreign countries, and it plans enlargments of missions in other countries, or portions of a country already covered by our effort, but not thoroughly enough, as far as our means would allow us to go. The *Majlis-i-Tahrik-t-Jadid* also is further divided into various departments, called *Vakalats*, the equivalent of *Nazarats* of the *Sadr Anjuman-i-Ahmadiyya*.

To perpetuate organised endeavour ; to develop the spirit of sacrifice in the service of Islam ; to promote the widening of the circle of propagating the Movement in different parts of the country ; to induce monetary contributions for financing various activities and programmes ; and to build up a proper frame of mind in view of the aims and objects of the Islamic Sharia, and the identical spirit of the Ahmadiyya Movement— these far flung activities of the Movement furnish another aspect of the mind at the back of all the planning, and implementation of blue prints carefully prepared.

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His endeavour to improve the economic condition of the

Muslims, particularly in the context of the Indian sub-continant, under the British and the *Banya*, also singles him out as a leader of extraordinary depth and vision. He was the first to draw attention of Indian Muslims that in fields where the Hindu trades people observed untouchability against the Muslims, the Muslims should retaliate by not purchasing those commodities from Hindu shopkeepers. This idea has, through the years, ever since, proved to be a great asset, for starting the Indian Muslims on the road to their economic emancipation from the clutches of the British and the *Banya*, both chips of the same block where anything to do with money was concerned.

Then there were the individual interviews he gave to a constant stream of his followers, who flocked to see him, to consult him on the vast range of their human relationships, disturbed by this or that factor, to seek his advice to remedy painful situations in their day to day life, and their social equations, among the people who lived around them.

These interviews took a big chunk of the 24 hours at his disposal every day. The nervous strain involved can hardly be imagined by those who have never gone through the grind themselves. When his beloved followers laid out their hearts, entirely bare before his eyes, their difficulties and woes, he was naturally deeply disturbed in sympathy for their suffering. But his smile, and his sympathy, acted, like some potent drug, to put a new life into them, and invest them with a new resolve, to face every obstacle with courage, and an invincible determination, to carry on without flinching anywhere.

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His private mailbag was another of his problems. Its contents varied from fifty to nearly two hundred and fifty letters, every-day. He read them all, and gave suitable replies. The office of his private secretary was one of the most important key jobs, since the private secretary handled all this mail, under the direction and supervision of the master. An important part of this correspondance was replies to weighty questions in the field of Religion asked by members of the Movement, or seekers after truth outside the fold. Request for prayers on the part of people in distress, in a limitless range of situations in human relation-

ships, was, perhaps, the most vital portion of this correspondance, with expressions of gratitude on the part of those who found that these prayers had been accepted by the Lord God, with necessary relief to those who had been in trouble.

He was a very keen and penetrating reader of the daily Press, with almost an almost infalible assessment of events as they unrolled themselves. Then there was a wide range of studies in the field of Compartive Religion, this being one of the most important duties of his great office, as the spokesman for Islam, and the Ahmadiyya Movement.

The circle of his private life was another call on his time, which he met with keen affection and sympthy. Four wives, with 23 children——he never failed in his duty to any. Those related to him, in any of these ties, always found him full of love and consideration. But whenever there came the call of duty to Islam, or the Movement, he shoved aside the claims of these ties, until he had, first, attended to the interests of Islam and the Ahmadiyya Movement.

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Thus we find that our beloved Khalifa, who has now passed away, was a great blessing for all. He was love and sympathy personified ; he was full of beneficence for all ; his personality was such that it created waves of love in the hearts of the people, who came into personal contact with him, in any way. He truly loved the Lord God, over and above all other kinds of love, in the entire range of human relationships. He was, on all occasions, a true and devoted servant of humanity, in widest and deepest sense of these words and expressions in human language. All of us had a most poignant desire that he remain among us for another term of his life on this earth ; but he had to go when his time came to leave. Rationally we always concede that this had to be, sooner or later—yet the realisation is deeply painful that he is no more among us——to guide us ; to comfort us ; to hearten us in our struggles of many kinds. But he is gone to meet his Master, and we have to carry on without him, pressing towards a goal, a destination that was very dear to him——and now which is even more dear to us, since it was his goal and the unalterable goal of us all. May the kind Lord help us in this sacred task, sacred also to his memory in our hearts. Amen !

Some Distinctive Features of Islam

Prof. Habibullah Khan

This is an age of strife and strain. Different types of problems social, political and economic are facing the world and creating tension among peoples and nations. An atmosphere of uneasiness and unrest prevails everywhere. The followers of all religions claim to possess a solution to the present-day evils and invite our attention by all conceiveable methods known at the present time. Under such circumstances one wonders whether all such claims can be correct. However, God Almighty has endowed us with reason and understanding and we can easily distinguish between right and wrong. Facts alone can prove the validity of such claims. Islam possesses some distinctive features which speak for themselves.

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1. The Unity of God

The existence of God is the corner-stone of all religions but religions differ widely in their conception of God and His attributes. According to Christianity the functions of Godhead are shared by three separate identities—the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost. This so called Holy Trinity is the very negation of Godhead. If the creation and sustenance of the universe is the collective work of three, it means they are each incapable of doing it singly and independently—a defect which is incongruent with the idea of divinity. One who needs another's aid cannot be God. On the other hand, if each of the three is capable of doing it singly and independently then there is no need for three. Multiplicity of Gods, equal in rank and authority means superfluity.

Among Hindus there is still greater complexity in this respect. They have separate gods for rain, fire and winds etc. According to them the sun, moon and stars, the rivers and trees and idols of stone etc., are all possessed of one or other attributes of God. Obviously, one cannot bow his head before his own creation or

worship objects of nature, which like himself, are bound by physical laws and are without an independent existence.

According to Islam there is no God but Allah, the Creator and Sustainer of the worlds. He neither begets nor is begotten. He suffers from no weakness or disability and has no equal or partner. He is Eternal and Everlasting and needs no external help. For Him there is no past or future. Nothing can remain hidden or secret from Him. He knows the needs of His creation and has made ample and adequate provision for them. Such a One alone deserves praise and we must all turn to Him for guidance and help. Knowing our problems and difficulties. He alone can show us the right path. Indeed He has already done this by giving us the complete and perfect law in the form of the Holy Quran. It is now our duty to read, understand and follow it. No other religion can compare with Islam in its conception of God and His attributes.

2. Islam presents a living God

An aspect of divine attributes in which Islam stands unique among religions is that it presents a living God before us. Jews, Christians and followers of other religions believe that God spoke to His chosen ones in the past and revealed to them the path of righteousness and virtue. In this respect they point to their prophets and saints who lived in the past; they can point to no evidence of God's grace at the present time. According to them, the blessings of revelation have discontinued. Today there is not a single person among them who can say that God speaks to him or reveals His pleasure to him. It means God does not speak now and makes no response to prayers. He does not hear the supplications of His servants. For other religions the very existence of God has become doubtful. It has become a fiction or a myth for which there is no proof.

Islam is the only religion which presents a living God at the present time. According to it God speaks to His chosen ones even today as He spoke in the past. For instance, in the present age He spoke to Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, the Promised

Messiah and Mahdi and the Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam, and revealed to him many important things concerning the future: the future of Islam, his own future, of his friends and followers, of his opponents and enemies and concerning many important persons and nations of the world. Many of these revelations have since proved true and others await fulfilment. Besides the Promised Messiah there are many among Muslims to whom God has spoken and speaks even now. For the benefit of His chosen ones and in support of true Islam He has shown mighty signs in Asia, Africa, Europe and America and has helped and is still helping His true servants in different ways. Perhaps it would not be out of place here to cite as an example the challenge recently given by Ahmadi Missionaries to Dr. Billy Graham, the famous evangelist of America, during his African tour. The Ahmadi Missionaries in East Africa as well as West Africa invited him to a prayer contest and suggested that thirty patients (ten Whites, ten Africans, ten Asians) whom doctors regard as incurable should be divided equally by lot and advocates of Islam and Christianity should pray for the health and survival of their allottees. This could be the easiest, surest and most practical way of deciding which is the religion favoured by God at the present time. This challenge received great publicity in Africa and elsewhere. In spite of exhortations from different parts of the world Dr. Billy Graham did not accept the challenge. His answer was that he had come to preach and proclaim the Gospel. His non acceptance clearly indicated that he was not confident of God's help; Ahmadi Missionaries were sure of it.

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Thus when Muslims speak of God and His attributes they, speak with confidence born of personal experience. Nothing can be more convincing than practical experience. For Muslims God is not a myth or a fiction but a fact and a reality open to experience.

3. Islam—Universal religion, and the Holy Quran—a perfect code

The advocates of other religions say that their holy books are meant for all mankind and they try to propagate their views as best as they can. But, in the first place, their own

scriptures make no such claim. On the other hand they contain sufficient internal evidence to show that they were meant for the guidance of a limited section of humanity. The Bible talks only of the God of Israel. Zoroaster's teachings are exclusively meant for the Iranian people. The vedic Rishis prescribe the penalty of pouring molten lead into the ears of Shudras, the original inhabitants of India, if they dare listen to a vedic recitation. As far as the New Testament is concerned, Jesus himself said :

> "I am not sent but unto the lost - sheep of the house of Israel" (Matthew 15 : 24),
>
> "These twelve Jesus sent forth, and commanded them, saying, Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not : but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel" (Mathew 10 : 5, 6).

Before the Holy Quran no book ever addressed itself to the whole of humanity. It is the Holy Prophet alone who declared:

> "Say, O Mankind, truly I am a Messenger to you all, from Allah". (7 : 159).

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Secondly, the text of all books excepting the Holy Quran has undergone a considerable change and it is difficult to say what is original and what is a later addition. As such, they have lost authenticity and can hardly serve as guide for mankind at the present time.

Moreover, they do not throw light on all matters on which guidance is needed. When direction is given, it is very meagre, and does not cover all aspects of the matter.

As opposed to these, the Holy Quran is a complete code and leaves out nothing that may be needed for the benefit and well-being of humanity. Its directions are comprehensive and clear and appeal to common sense and reason. There is nothing in it which is repugnant to human nature or opposed to scientific truths.

Then its commandments take note of all human factors, i.e.,

sex, age, physical fitness, prevailing conditions, etc., and give instructions accordingly. For instance, it requires us to offer prayers. But it does not stop at giving the command only. It also explains what is to be done in peace or in battle, in health or in illness, in normal times or in an emergency or during travel. The hours of prayers, the mode of worship and the preparation to be made about it are all clearly pointed out. Then it explains the purpose of worship and the benefits that accrue from it. It does not only describe the form but also points to its wisdom, so that it may be performed with ease and pleasure.

Man's relations with and his duties towards his Creator and fellow beings have been clearly explained. There are instructions for the parent and the child, the husband and the wife, the teacher and the taught and the ruler and the ruled. All problems economic, social, political, national and international find an appropriate place in it and all aspects of human life have been duly considered.

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Moreover, Islamic law is equally applicable to all nations and countries of the world and, being final, is meant for all times to come. Its teachings and principles are as sound in this scientific age as they were at the time of its origin. They appeal to reason and do not clash with science.

Thus Islam has proved its worth and excellence during the past 1400 years and there is no reason why it should fail in the future.

4. Islam—a religion of Peace

Being a universal religion Islam has laid down clear instructions for maintaining peace and order in the land and establishing amicable relations between man and man. It has pointed out main causes of friction and has struck at the very root of them. Some of these are discussed below.

Class and race distinction

One great cause of disturbance and upheavel is discrimination based on class, colour or race. The Brahmins in India regard themselves superior to other races and castes. They have reserved

for themselves special rights and privileges while Shudras—the original inhabitants of India—who form a fairly large part of the country's population, are forced to lead the most abject life. The treatment meted out to them can be judged from the following quotations from Manu Smarti, which is admitted by Hindu scholars as an authentic Hindu book of law :

(i) "A Brahmin may seize without hesitation, if he be distressed for a subsistence, the goods of his Shudra slave ; for as that slave can have no property, his master can take his goods" (VIII : 417).

(ii) "Should he (Shudra), through pride, give instruction to priests concerning their duty, let the king order some hot oil to be dropped into his mouth and ear" (VIII : 272)

(iii) "But a man of the servile class, whether bouhgt or unbought, may be compelled to perform servile duty ; because such a man was created by the Self Existent for the purpose of serving Brahmin" (VIII : 413).

This class distinction is naturally bound to create hatred between man and man and has been the cause of bloodshed in the Indian sub-continent. The present day Hindu-Muslim riots in that country are based on the belief that Muslims are also untouchables and have no right to live in that country.

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This caste system, given by Manu, which divides human beings into four distinct groups or classes, each having a restricted sphere of action, is still prevalent in India. It is a canker in human society which modern civilization has failed to cure and uproot. Millions and millions of people are suffering untold miseries due to this one cause alone.

Then there is racial distinction. Hitler and his party was suffering from this complex. As descendants of the ancient Aryans, they regarded themselves (like the Aryans in India) superior to other nations. This false notion was one of the causes of the second world war.

Colour Discrimination

Finally there is distinction based on colour which is a major

source of disturbance in the world. The white people regard themselves superior to coloured races. Let alone past history, even in the modern age the "civilized" whites look down upon coloured men, be they Asians, Africans or Americans, and brutally trample down under foot their rights. In the forum of U. N. they talk of freedom and equality, co-existence and equal opportunities for all. But when it comes to practice, they fail miserably. South Africa and Rhodesia are glaring examples of apartheid philosophy. Its consequences and results are too obvious to need mention. This is not restricted to Africa alone. England and America, the bulwark of modern civilization, have been the scene of clashes between the whites and the coloured. Despite their science and technology and "Superior Civilization" they have not been able to eradicate this evil. International organizations like the U.N. and the Commonwealth have also failed miserably and their record shows that they can do nothing in the matter.

Islam has cut at the root of these evils. The Holy Quran says :

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(i) "O Mankind ! We have created you from a male and a female and We have made you into tribes and sub-tribes that you may recognize one another. Verily, the most honourable among you, in the sight of Allah, is he who is the most righteous among you." (49 : 14)

(ii) "O ye who believe ! Let not one people deride another people who may be better then they, nor let women deride other women, who may be better than they. And defame not your own people, nor call one another by nick-names." (49 : 12)

Instructions like the above had the desired effect. In practice they established the sanctity of all human individuals and brought them on the same level. As humans, white and black are equal and have the same privileges in the eyes of law and society. In the world of Islam there are no separate mosques, no separate pews for any. The Arab is not superior to non-Arab and has no rights distinct from others. After accepting Islam even the slaves acquired high status and were given

responsible positions. Osama, the son of a former slave, was given the command of an army which included eminent personalities like Hazrat Abu Bakr and Omar who became the first and the second caliph after the Holy Prophet. History bears testimony to the fact that in the Indian sub-continent there were a number of rulers who belonged to a slave dynasty. By dint of ability they slowly rose to the position of rulers.

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Religious Intolerance

Another important cause of friction and disturbance is intolerance in matters of religion. In the Middle Ages practically the whole of Europe was involved in wars between Catholics and Protestants. Then there were the Crusades. Christian Europe rose in arms against the Muslim monarch, Salahuddin. Similarly there were bitter clashes in the Indian sub-continent between the Aryans and the Budhists and between Hindus and Muslims. Only last year the Indian armies, in sheer disregard of international boundaries, marched into Pakistan without any ultimatum. The basic cause of this armed clash was the fact that the Hindu majority of this sub-continent cannot tolerate that a part of it should be inhabited and governed by Muslims.

This religious fanaticism which has been responsible for untold miseries throughout the world is whipped to the extreme when foul abuse is flung at the religious leaders of other communities. Prophets of God, appearing at different times and in different oountries, have been made the target of bitter calumny by the followers of other religions. Such a thing is bound to increase hatred. It fans the flames of discord and leads to very grave consequences.

Islam honours all Prophets

The Holy Quran is the only religious book in the world which has made it compulsory for its followers to honour and respect the prophets of all nations and to regard their scriptures as the revealed word of God.

It says:

(i) "And there is guide for every people" (13:8)

(ii) "And for every people there is a Messenger" (10:48)

(iii) "This Messenger (of Ours) believes in that which has been revealed to him from His Lord, and (so do) the believers. All (of them) believe in Allah, and in His angels, and in His books, and in His Messengers, (saying) We make no distinction between any of His Messengers". (2:286).

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A Muslim is enjoined to respect the holy books and prophets of other nations as a part of his faith. To us Muslims Budha, Zoroaster, Confucious, Krishna, Ram Chander, Moses and Jesus are equally worthy of respect as Messengers of God and as great benefactors of the human race. They are as much our own as they were of the people for whose guidance they were sent down by the Almighty.

The excellence of this Islamic teaching is quite obvious. Once the dignity, honour and respect of the holy scriptures and the prophets of God is established, much of the communal bitterness and religious ill-will disappears. This Islamic teaching can form the basis of harmony and accord between religious communities.

Isalm Condemns Violence and compulsion in religion

Islam lays great stress on maintaining peace and harmony in the world and strongly condemns all forms of lawlessness and violence, particularly in the matter of religion. For instance, it says :

(i) "And of men there is he whose talk on this life would please thee, and he would call Allah to witness as to that which is in his heart, yet he is the most contentious of quarrellers. And when he is in authority, he runs about in the land to create disorder in it and destroy the crops and the progeny (of men); and Allah loves not disorder." (2 : 205—6).

(ii) "And do good (to others) as Allah has done good to thee ; and seek not to make mischief in the earth.

Verily, Allah loves not those who make mischief". (28 : 78)

(iii) "There should be no compulsion in religion. Surely, right has become distinct from wrong". (2 : 257).

Addressing his companions the Holy Prophet (peace be on him) once said :

"Help your brother, be he the oppressor or the oppressed". The need of giving help to the oppressed was quite obvious to the Prophet's companions but helping the oppressor was not understandable to them. They desired to be enlightened on this point. The Holy Prophet (peace be on him) explained that helping the oppressor means he should be advised and induced to refrain from exceeding the limits and usurping other people's rights and property.

Thus Islam does not tolerate any kind of violence, compulsion or coercion, particularly in the matter of religion, and stresses the need of respecting other people's rights and sentiments.

Unfortunately the opponents of Islam, particularly the Christian Missionaries, have made a persistent effort to depict Islam as a savage religion which preaches violence and advocates the use of sword for its propagation. So long as the Western world remained ignorant of the true teachings of Islam, this false propaganda found ready acceptance everywhere. Happily, through the efforts of Ahmadiyya Missions in Europe and America a slow change in the outlook of the Westerners is now discernible. Those among them, who have made a genuine effort to arrive at the truth and have made an unbiased study of this great religion, now realize that they have been kept in the dark. The beauties of Islam, its comprehensiveness and simplicity, its rational teachings and freedom from contradictions and dogma is slowly dawning upon their minds. Thinkers and philosophers, like Bernard Shaw, clearly see that Islam is going to be the future religion of the world. Writers like Laura Veccia Vaglieri have candidly expressed an appreciation of Islam and its Holy Founder (Peace and blessings of God be upon him).

5. Unity and Discipline

One important feature of Islam is its great stress on unity

and discipline. A Muslim is required to offer his prayers in congregation five times a day. The Islamic mode of prayer in itself is symbolic of these fine qualities. All the people of one locality gather together in a mosque at the appointed hour, stand in rows, shoulder to shoulder, and follow their Imam who leads the prayers.

They carry out the prayer-ritual together as one man. While in prayer they are a model of unity, discipline and organization. They face in one direction and listen to one voice.

Islam advocates freedom of thought and action and does not hinder the development of individuality. A person has perfect freedom to choose between right and wrong. He may accept Islam or reject it as he pleases. There is absolutely no compulsion in this matter. But once he enters the fold of Islam he is expected to observe certain restrictions of his own accord and follow the path prescribed by his Creator. At home or in office, in solitude or society, in hours of liesure or work a Muslim's life remains disciplined. A true Muslim welcomes it and observes it with care.

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6. Pilgrimage—a Unique form of Collective Worship

Islam attaches great importance to congregational worship. As mentioned above Muslims are required to assemble in local mosques five times a day. This enables them to meet and understand one another. They get an opportunity of knowing one another's problems and difficulties and can lend a helping hand.

On Fridays the entire town meets together in Friday prayers. This is a greater assembly and provides an oppertunity of getting acquainted with problems of social or national interest. This Friday prayer, which includes a sermon, is compulsory for all Muslims.

To corwn this all, there is the pilgrimage to Mecca. This is an important form of collective worship prescribed by Islam. As a matter of fact it is one of the five pillars on which Islam rests. The main object is to create among Muslims a feeling of attachment to their centre, and to foster a spirit of

sacrifice, unity and brotherhood among themselves. Muslims from all parts of the world assemble at Mecca during a prescribed period and offer collective sacrifice. This worship brings people of different climes and races together and enables them to meet at an international level. They may have different colour and customs but as Muslims they are brothers and must strengthen one another.

The Master and the slave, the high and the low, the male and the female, all dress in plain white cloth in the same manner and stand humbled in the presence of their Creator. Like true servants and true lover they show willingness to sacrifice their all for His sake.

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Thus pilgrimage inculcates equality, fraternity and brotherhood and stresses the need of individual and collective sacrifice for strengthening a centre and maintaining unity among their ranks. The Muslims, to whatever part of the globe they may belong, obey one prophet, follow one book, converge on one point and have one common aim in life.....the worship of One God and the service of all humanity. No other religion promotes such perfect worship.

It may perhaps be said that all this is very fine as philosophy. But in practice, the Muslim world is engrossed in all those evils which are prevalent among other peoples. Quite true. But this is no fault of Islam or its Holy Founder (peace be on him). Muslims have fallen into degradation because they have ignored their Creator and have become indifferent to the book revealed for their guidance. At present, by their lip-profession they are holding on to the letter but have lost the spirit.

Still another point of distinction and excellence in Islam is that, amidst such gloom, it also holds out hope and help for the future. Every one hundred years a teacher arises from among the believers who receives guidance from the Almighty God and shows people the right path. The Holy Prophet (peace be on him) has said :

"Verily, at the beginning of every century, God

will raise among Muslims one who will rejuvenate for them their religion".

This prophecy and promise has seen fulfilment in the past thirteen hundred years. In the present century (the 14th after Hijra) Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian (India) came as a Messenger of God and founded the Ahmadia Movement in Islam. He revitalized Islam and presented it in its pristine glory. With mighty signs he proved the existence of a living God and restored the true spirit of Islam.

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Through the efforts of Hazrat Ahmad (peace be on him) Islam is on the march again. It is gaining ground in Asia, Africa, Europe and America. The Ahmadis are building mosques, translating the Holy Quran in different languages and unfurling the banner of Islam in all parts of the world. In their persons they are depicting the true meaning of Islam.

The war in Veit Nam, the tension in Kashmir, Cyprus and Palestine and the racial problems of South African States all point that U.N. has miserably failed in its purpose and is merely a tool in the hands of the big powers. The well-being of millions and millions of people is being shamefully sacrificed at the altar of power politics. There is tension and frustration all round. Islam alone can heal the wounds and can bring peace and satisfaction to the ailing humanity. Sooner or later its worth and excellence will be realised. A new world order will be established.

Praise belongs to Allah, the Creator and Sustainer of all the worlds.

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